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മരാമത്തുകൃഷി.

ഇതു ഡിപ്പാർട്ടുമെണ്ടിൽ വലിയ ഓരോ സംഖ്യകൾ ചിലവു ചെയ്തു വളരെ പൊതുജനങ്ങൾക്കു ഉണ്ടാകുന്നുണ്ടെന്നു് സമ്മതിക്കുന്നതെ നിവൃത്തിയില്ല. എന്നൽ കഴിഞ്ഞ വെള്ളപ്പൊക്കത്തിൽ കേടുകൾ വന്നു് വഴികൾ ഇതു കൊല്ലത്തിൽ അനുവദിച്ച സംഖ്യകൾ ചിലവു ചെയ്തു കേടുകൾ പോക്കുവാൻ കാലം തീരാതിരുന്നതുകൊണ്ടു് ജനങ്ങൾക്കു് അനുഭവിക്കേണ്ടിവന്ന സങ്കടങ്ങൾക്കു് ഒരു കയ്യും കണക്കും കാണുന്നില്ല. ഇന്നേവരെ ആ വക ജോലികൾ നിവൃത്തിക്കപ്പെട്ടിട്ടില്ലെന്നു് വ്യസനപൂർവ്വം പ്രസ്താവിക്കേണ്ടിവന്നിരിക്കുന്നു.

കോൾകൃഷിയുടെ കെട്ടുസ്ഥാനമായ ഏഴാമാക്കലിലുള്ള ചിറ കഴിഞ്ഞ വെള്ളപ്പൊക്കത്തിൽ പൊട്ടിപ്പോയിട്ടുള്ളതു് ഗവർമ്മെണ്ടിനറിയാമല്ലൊ. എന്നാൽ ഇക്കൊല്ലത്തിൽ ആ ചിറയുടെ എല്ലാ ഭാഗങ്ങളും കേടുതീർക്കാത്തതിനാൽ വീണ്ടും കേടുകൾ വന്നിട്ടുണ്ടെന്നു് പറയേണ്ടിവന്നിരിക്കുന്നു. ഇതുകൾ ഇപ്രകാരം കന്നിമാസത്തെ കൃത്യം തീർക്കാത്തപക്ഷം ഓരോ വെള്ളം കോൾനിലങ്ങളിൽ കടപ്പാൻ ഇടയാകുന്നതും അങ്ങനെ സംഭവിച്ചാൽ കോൾകൃഷിക്കു് തീരാത്ത നഷ്ടം നേരിടുന്നതാണു്. ഇതു് വളരെ സങ്കടകരമാണെന്നു് പറയാതെ നിവൃത്തിയില്ല. അതിന്റെ കേടുകൾ തീർക്കുവാൻ ഈ കൊല്ലത്തിൽ വൃശ്ചികാലമുതു് കായലിൽ വെള്ളം പൊന്തിയതിനേക്കാൾ കൂടൽ വെള്ളം നിൽക്കുന്ന വിധത്തിൽ താഴ്ത്തി കെട്ടുന്നതായാൽ വളരെ നിലങ്ങളിൽ നടുക്കാതെ കഴിയുന്നതും കൃഷിയായി വളരെ നിലങ്ങൾ മുണ്ടകവിള ഇറക്കുവാൻ സാധിക്കുന്നതുമാണു്. ഈ സംഗതിയിൽ ഗവർമ്മെണ്ടിന്റെ ദൃഷ്ടിയെ പ്രത്യേകം ക്ഷണിച്ചുകൊള്ളുന്നു.

Mr. GEORGE CHAKYAMURI (*Palliviruttl*).

At the outset, permit me, Sir, to request you, on behalf of the constituency which I have the honour to represent in this House, to convey to His Highness, our Gracious Sovereign, our sentiments of loyalty and sincere gratitude for thus allowing us to take a direct part in the administration of the country. No doubt, the constitutional advance made by our State by the creation of this new Legislative Council is quite inadequate and unsatisfactory compared to the educational and other position of our little State, yet we have all come here to-day to work out in a spirit of toleration and good-will the constitution granted to us by our Gracious Sovereign, to manifest to Him that we, His loyal subjects, do deserve to be associated with His Government on a wider scale.

Coming to the day's business, I am only sorry that our present Finance Member has been put to the painful

duty of presenting a deficit budget to the first session of the first Legislative Council in Cochin. It is a fact very well known to every member of this House that this state of affairs has been brought about by a series of financial blunders committed by successive Diwans of the State, and that neither the Finance Member nor the present Government has to be blamed for bringing our financial position to this minus state. Our successive Diwans in the past, some posing as exponents of industrial renascence, some as saviours of the depressed classes and some others, evidently with no possible eye to the future, but in full contentment of the present, trying to make others also happy like them by profusely distributing and creating new and unnecessary posts, have all combined in bringing about this effect on the budget of our State, with the result that to-day we are face to face with a budget having a deficit of Rs. 1,38,000.

Running through the general establishment of our administration, one cannot but be impressed with the fact that our administration is over-manned. I join with my learned colleague, the member for the Jewish constituency, in thinking that the office of a Legislative Assistant to the Government Advocate is a mere superfluity. It would have been more graceful for the Government to create this new and rather strange post, after working the Council for some time, and after the Government Advocate has found it difficult to cope with the new work thrust upon him, rather than rush on with the appointment, thus creating an impression in the mind of others that the appointment is made to suit some other arrangement.

The post of Additional Civil Surgeon and X-Ray Specialist, which has been created of late, and about which my learned colleagues have spoken so much, next come in for remarks. Sir, with regard to this, I can only say that I endorse every word that has been spoken about it by my learned colleagues sitting on this side of the House, and I strongly urge upon the Government the necessity of abolishing this post immediately and countermanding at once the order, if any, for the X-Ray apparatus, before the goods leave London. Examples of unnecessary over-manning could be multiplied to any extent. But I do not propose to tax your

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patience too much by these unpleasant details; but I conclude this part of my speech by joining with my learned colleague, Mr. Achyuta Menon, in appealing to the Government to institute a Committee of Retrenchment, as early as possible, to cut down all forms of unnecessary expenses to the State.

Coming to the Agricultural Department—of which the less said the better— it was really a great surprise to me when I heard my learned colleagues, coming from the north, complaining that very little useful work was being done by the department there. For the last five or six years we, in Cochin-Kanayannur Taluk, were experiencing a sort of contagious disease among the cocoanut palms of our taluk. Till very recently, till after the disease has spread considerably, destroying thousands of trees, the department maintained an attitude of callous indifference. We, in the south, were all the while under the impression that the Agricultural Department with its head-quarters at Trichur was doing wonderful work there, and that it had no time to devote to this farthest corner of the State. But now, we have it on the authority of many of the representatives coming from the north that no useful work is being done there also. If this be the real state of affairs, I have no hesitation in appealing to the members of this House not to vote a single pie for that department, unless definite assurance is given to this House that definite schemes of usefulness will soon be formulated and carried out with a view to the agricultural betterment of the people.

Coming to the Scientific Department, it is my humble opinion that Cochin does not require, and cannot afford to have, a special department, the Museum. I am sure this House will bear with me fully, when I say that many of our undertakings, particularly the industrial ones, constitute in themselves such a fine museum that we need not take the trouble of maintaining a museum for the entertainment of the people of this State. At any rate, considering the enormous demand we have on our limited purse, I think we will be ill-advised, if we spend any more money in maintaining lions and tigers, when we can hardly maintain human souls who have a claim on the resources of our State

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Coming to the Department of Sanitation and Conservancy, I see that substantial contributions are made by the Government towards the Municipalities of Mattanchery, Ernakulam, Trichur and Chittur. In this connection, I want to emphasise the fact that, while making these contributions, Government has a duty to see that these units of self-Government are managed in strict compliance with the rules framed by the Government for their good and proper management. I fail to see why, in the matter of the Mattanchery Municipality, where a clear majority of the elected representatives of the people have declared openly their no-confidence in the President, the Government should not immediately interfere and set right matters. I also understand that the Chairman of the Mattanchery Municipality is now carrying on the administration, disregarding the views of the majority of the Councillors. If this be true, it is indeed a serious reflection on the Government to allow in this twentieth century such an high-handed step on the part of a Chairman, whose claim to the position can only be the confidence of the elected representatives of the people. If the rules and regulations framed by the Government are defective in this respect and give it no power to interfere at this stage, I say, the rules should be amended forthwith, and the Government should see that this playing with public affairs and public funds is immediately put a stop to. It is high time that the Chairman is made to understand that, in playing with public opinion and public funds, he is playing with fire.

A word more, by way of conclusion. I have heard it suggested from many quarters that levying of income-tax will be a fit remedy to get over the present financial embarassment of the Government. I shall not oppose the measure, if I see that the time has come when our Government cannot get on without additional taxation. But I strongly maintain that, unless and until every step has been taken to prevent the present enormous waste of public funds going on in almost every branch of our administration, and unless and until our Government has launched on a new policy of thrift and carefulness, the Government will not be justified, nay, it will even be immoral on the part of the Government, if it asks for additional taxation at the

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hands of its citizens, who are already taxed to their utmost limit.

Mr. N. PADMANABHA MENON (*Cranganur*).

Mr. President—

Sir, This Council has condemned in no uncertain terms the present financial policy, or rather the want of a stable financial policy of the Government, and has indicated, though roughly, the lines on which the finances of the State should be administered. I make no apology in adding to the volume of speeches, and my idea in rising to address you, Sir, is to emphasise the various points raised in the course of the debate and thereby to show to the Government the unanimous wishes of the representatives of the people.

For a long period the administration of Cochin was in the hands of foreign Diwans. While recognising with gratitude all the good that they have conferred upon the State, we cannot ignore the stern fact that a policy of making a scheme by one person and unmaking it by the others, and of organizing and re-organizing departments, more in accordance with their own pet theories and prejudices, than in compliance with the needs and wishes of the peple, have resulted in a serious financial crisis, which we are now called upon to tide over. We are now called upon to shoulder a responsibility, which we have not created, and to devise ways and means, which we are yet to know whether the Government would accept in the spirit in which they are offered. Even this year's budget is conspicuous by the absence of a guiding financial policy. We may call it a "Retrenchment Budget" by courtesy. The doubtful attempts to balance the figures are not dictated by any definite policy acceptable to the Council, and the Finance Member, in his long statement, has not, in many important matters, taken us into his confidence. The reduction of a few thousands from the Town Improvement Works or the non-increase of demands under the educational heads does not disclose any policy. Soch methods will not fill the exchequer, nor will they fill up a deficit permanently. The necessity to embark upon a scheme of Education that will ultimately lead us to free and compulsory Primary Education is most pressing,

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and one of the reasons that induced the Education Code Review Committee to drop the subject of compulsory education was the exigencies of finance. A time will come, and I hope, not in the distant future, when the Government of His Highness will have to face that problem in all its aspects. The State will have to find funds to finance it, when it comes, and to shut our eyes to that contingency now is only to intensify the difficulites.

Sir, we have also to consider the question of transferring more burden to Local Bodies and Municipalities. Past experience in that direction justifies such a course. Primary Education can very well be transferred to Village Panchayats and Municipalities. That course was recommended by the Education Code Revision Committee. It is the legitimate function of the Local Bodies to take up the canal and irrigation works and to construct and to maintain roads and bridges within their jurisdiction. Rural sanitation and medical aid can also be entrusted to these bodies. The increase in their civic responsibility that will result from shouldering these additional burdens will ultimately create a better class of citizens, and Sir, it will relieve the State of a portion of its financial burden also. I maintain that it is high time to make over to them their legitimate burden, the Government exercising only an effective supervision.

The Finance Member has anticipated an increase of one lakh of rupees under Land revenue proper from the sale of back-water areas and forest exclusions. In respect of the former, I have to make a remark, and to utter a word of protest, against the present system of back-water assignment. The frontage of the lands adjoining the back-water areas are auctioned, the Government fixing a minimum of Rs. 100 to Rs. 600 per acre. The owners of the adjacent lands are in most cases "small-holders." They are not capitalists, and they are given by the Government only Hobson's choice in the matter of auction. They have either to bid deep-water areas at an exorbitant price, or to see a big capitalist, probably a Cochin merchant or so, purchasing his frontage, thus depriving his lands of all the advantages of proximity to, and communication with, the back-water areas. That the adjacent land-holder

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was forced into purchase will be evidenced by the papers in connection with the assignments effected in the years 1098 and 1099 in the Cochin-Kanayannur and Cranganur Taluks. To convert areas then purchased into wet lands or cocoanut gardens requires a large outlay which the "small-holders" cannot afford. The capitalist, whose money is locked up in banks, probably at 4½ or 5 per cent per annum, has the upper hand. It will be a great injustice to the holders of small estates, if, for the purpose of swelling the income, the present system is persisted in. The measure must be treated as an agricultural one, the ultimate aim being to create larger cultivable areas, and not one whose chief aim is to find funds to cover a deficit. The Government levies assessment upon these lands, from the date of auction. This makes the injury all the greater. For nearly 4 or 5 years from the date of assignment, there is no yield from them. If these back-water areas are sold at low prices, as is done in Travancore, and the maximum assessment collected by a graduated scale of annual increment, the maximum being reached, say, in the course of 5 or 6 years, the hardships experienced under the present system can be reduced to the minimum point.

I cannot close these remarks without expressing my surprise at, and entering an emphatic protest against, the exclusion of the Cranganur finances from the budget. Justice required its inclusion. Courtesy required at least a word of explanation. Sir, is Cranganur a foreign State? If so, why was Cranganur asked to send up a member to this House? Why am I summoned here to take part in this debate? The Administration Report of 1098 says:—"For administrative purposes the State is divided into 6 taluks—Cochin-Kanayannur, Mukundapuram, Trichur, Talappalli, Chittur and Cranganur." Search the constitution of this Council wherever we will, no word is mentioned, no hint is given that Cranganur is a non-votable taluk, governed by the Maharaja of Cochin. Subject to the same laws and shouldering the same responsibilities, sharing the same hopes and entertaining the same fears as the other taluks of Cochin, the people of Cranganur were, till the 12th of Karkadagam 1101, proud to be called Cochinites. The

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political position of Cranganur has been explained yesterday by the member for Mulakunnattukavu. It is said, "Cranganur is financially autonomous". It means only that Cranganur funds and accounts are kept separately. The Cranganur Chief has no powers of initiation in matters financial, and he has no legislative powers. The laws passed by this House will become laws in Cranganur also. I maintain, there is not a trace of justification in excluding Cranganur finances from the State budget. In Cochin the power of voting supplies has been given to the people. Are we to understand that in Cranganur it is still reserved? Then, to whom? I fail to see. Precedents and past history do not justify this exclusion. Administrative convenience and moral considerations do not justify this. The constitution of this Council does not allow it, and perhaps, these are the reasons why the Finance Member did not give a word of explanation. Sir, my protest against this exclusion is not based upon sentiment alone. There are practical difficulties. I shall explain my point by an illustration. Suppose, the member of the South Ezhuva or Muhammadan constituency proposes, and this House passes, a resolution to make a grant for special educational purposes to their constituents. How can it be worked in Cranganur? Cranganur funds cannot be touched, because this House has no power and jurisdiction over them. This is only one of the many difficulties that will crop up. In conclusion, I have only to appeal to the Government to cure this oversight—for I am loth to believe it is otherwise—and to the members of this House to see that justice is done to Cranganur.

Mr. CHAKKO CHERUVATHUR (*Vadakkancheri*).

I request you, Sir, to convey the heart-felt gratitude of the members of my constituency to His Highness the Maharaja for having allowed a representative of theirs to take part in the administration of the State. It is a most regrettable matter that we have to deal with a deficit budget this year. With regard to the items of demand, I will make a few suggestions which strike me, since I think there would be no time for explaining all the points which I want to explain.

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Firstly, I shall take up the second item of grant, namely, Agriculture and Panchayats. Upon this point much has been said, and I do not think there is any good of my speaking further. I represent, practically, an agricultural constituency situated in an agricultural taluk, and I myself may boast to be an agriculturist. My learned colleague for the Anglo-Indian constituency stated that the Agricultural Department is of much use to us. Well, I do not mean to say that this department is useless. It is useful, provided it is usefully managed. As it is, it appears that this department exists for the prestige of the State. If so, there is no need to spend so much funds for this purpose. If it is to be of use to the people, the whole department must be overhauled. The reasons given by my learned colleague are based on certain things which he has seen in books and papers. Well, books and papers alone will not be very useful to mend matters. The agriculturist who meets with practical difficulties may not get out of his difficulties by preaching about books. For instance, the agriculturist who is confronted with pests in his paddy fields is asked to catch hold of the pests, and then send them to the Head of the Department. The department has got 8 Inspectors, as I understand from the budget. I do not know what the Inspectors and the Superintendent are doing. Petitions are sent to the Superintendent. These petitions are replied to, only after the whole crop is raised, so that, as it is now managed, we, the agriculturists of the Talappalli Taluk, beg most respectfully to submit that the department is not usefully managed—not to put it in worse language.

Then, the department does not seem to have studied the nature of work to be done in the Cochin State. Perhaps, English methods of agriculture alone are known to the Superintendent. But, after coming here, local conditions ought to have been studied, and local needs ought to have been inquired into and supplied. Much has also been said about the constitution of the model Farm. A person who goes to the Farm feels something like what the old Guliver felt when he found himself in the island of Brobdingnag. He finds there men 25 feet high, rats as big as buffaloes, &c. Everything there is seen on a large scale. Similarly, the person who goes

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to this institution finds that it is a hopeless thing to follow, because, by a reference to the budget, it will be seen that for the Farm operations Rs. 8,500 are spent, for the fodder of cattle, exclusive of the charges of the cattle-breeding operations, Rs. 7,000 spent for cooly labour, and like expenses incurred for securing an income of Rs. 12,000 and odd worth of paddy and other minor items of income. At this rate, the amount swells to something like Rs. 23,000 and odd, not to speak of the establishment charges. This will go to show that this model Farm is intended for all agriculturists as a model not to follow. Since other points have been urged by my colleagues, I do not mean to speak anything upon them.

Excise.—The policy of the Government, as stated in the Financial Statement, is the maximum income from the minimum consumption ; but the budget shows otherwise, because a reference tells us that the income from fermented toddy tapping was :—

1097	....	....	Rs. 94,000
1098	...	....	,, 1,20,000
1099	....	....	,, 1,40,000
1100	....	....	,, 1,65,000

and in 1101 Rs. 1,80,000, whereas for jaggery in 1097 it was nearly Rs. 8,000. In 1098 and 1099 it was Rs. 7,000. In 1100 and 1101 it has gone down to Rs. 8, 000. Now, jaggery is an industry which ought to have been encouraged in the State ; but I am extremely sorry to find that the department is absolutely discouraging that industry. These jaggery tappers are not given licenses till all the fermented toddy tappers are supplied with licenses. Their licenses are withheld till the end of Chingam, or even the middle of Kanni, for this express purpose ; then only jaggery tappers are given licenses, of course, looking merely to the income of the State. The department has not looked very much to the encouragement of jaggery tapping. It has resulted in jaggery being imported into the State from Travancore and the neighbouring British parts. The fact that jaggery manufactured in our State has come to cost more than the jaggery imported from other parts is very discouraging.

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